

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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R 051147Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 360

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5192

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GE, UR, EEWT

SUBJECT: CALL ON SOVIET AMBASSADOR YEFREMOV

1. ON FEBRUARY 4 I MADE MY COURTESY CALL ON SOVIET AMBASSADOR MICHAIL TIMOFEJEWITSCH YEFREMOV, A VISIT THAT LASTED ONE HOUR. DCM GROVE ACCOMPANIED ME. PRESENT WITH YEFREMOV WAS COUNSELOR ALEXANDER SACHAROW. BEYOND THE PLEASANTRIES OF OUR DISCUSSION, SEVERAL THINGS THAT YEFREMOV SAID WERE OF INTEREST.

2. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT YEFREMOV HAD INTENDED IN ADVANCE TO COMMENT ON THE TRADE REFORM BILL, WHICH HE DID IN STRONG TERMS, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING OPENING COURTESIES, SAYING THAT THE SOVIET UNION "CANNOT STAND SUCH CONDITIONS". HE SAID THE BILL HAD BEEN AS HARMFUL TO THE U.S. AS IT HAD BEEN TO THE SOVIET UNION. HE DID NOT COUPLE HIS CRITICISM WITH STRONG SUPPORT FOR
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DETENTE AND REFERENCE TO THE LARGER ELEMENTS OF OUR

RELATIONSHIP THAT REMAIN IN GOOD SHAPE. MISSING WAS THE EFFUSIVE PRAISE OF DETENTE CONTAINED IN HIS REMARKS OF JANUARY 18 AT THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR'S LUNCHEON (BERLIN 5093).

3. I REPLIED THAT OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, WITH ITS SEPARATION OF POWERS, WAS DIFFICULT FOR OTHER COUNTRIES TO UNDERSTAND. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER, AS I WAS SURE HE KNEW, THAT PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD OPPOSED THE INCLUSION OF THE PROVISION THAT THE SOVIETS FOUND OFFENSIVE. YEFREMOV SAID IT WAS HOPED THE ACT WOULD BE REVISED, AND I HAD THE IMPRESSION FROM HIS DISCUSSION OF REVISION THAT THE WORD "EXPECTED" WAS INTENDED RATHER THAN "HOPED".

4. THE AMBASSADOR COMMENTED WITH EMPHASIS ON THE FIGHTING IN VIETNAM AND WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS U.S. NAVAL ACTIVITIES AROUND VIETNAM AND NATO MANEUVERS NEAR PORTUGAL, SAYING THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES MADE THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE, WHO WANTED PEACE, UNCOMFORTABLE. HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD NOT RESORT TO THE USE OF FORCE IN AN AGE WHEN WE SHOULD NOT ONLY SEEK PARITY IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS BUT SHOULD DO AWAY WITH THEM ALTOGETHER.

5. RESPONDING, I NOTED THE EFFORTS OF SECRETARY KISSINGER TO SECURE ADHERENCE TO THE VIETNAM AGREEMENTS IN WHICH THE SOVIET UNION HAD UNDOUBTEDLY PLAYED A PART. YEFREMOV MADE NO FURTHER COMMENT ON VIETNAM, BUT NODDED VIGOROUSLY AT MY SUGGESTION THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD PLAYED A PART IN THE VIETNAM AGREEMENTS. I NOTED ALSO THE EFFORTS OF SECRETARY KISSINGER IN THE MID-EAST AND HIS IMPENDING VISIT TO THAT AREA, WITHOUT ANY RESPONSE FROM THE AMBASSADOR. TO MY STATEMENT THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE DESIRED PEACE, WANTED NO WAR, AND THAT DETENTE WAS A CORNERSTONE OF U.S. POLICY, THE AMBASSADOR NODDED ASSENT TO MY STATEMENT ON DETENTE.

6. HE SPOKE APPROVINGLY OF THE VLADIVOSTOK AND SALT I
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AGREEMENTS BUT MADE NO OBSERVATION ON THE RESUMPTION OF SALT TALKS. HE SEEMS TO HAVE GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF THE DETAILS OF STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS, SAYING HE HAD SEEN SUCH WEAPONS AND SPEAKING OF THEIR INCREASING SIZE AND POWER. HE AGREED WITH MY OBSERVATION THAT NUCLEAR CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD BE FATAL TO BOTH SIDES.

7 AT NO POINT IN OUR DISCUSSION, DID HE COMMENT ON THE GDR OR ANY ASPECT OF THE GERMAN SITUATION. OUR CONVERSATION COULD AS EASILY HAVE BEEN HELD IN THE KREMLIN FOR ITS LACK OF ANY ORIENTATION TO THE GERMAN SCENE.

8. COMMENT: DURING THE MEETING, THE ATMOSPHERE WAS CORDIAL AND COURTEOUS AND LATER, AS YEFREMOV LED US ON A TOUR THROUGH THE CAVERNOUS RECEPTION HALLS OF HIS EMBASSY, HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT HIS STAFF AND THE U.S. EMBASSY STAFF WOULD WORK CLOSELY TOGETHER AND ESTABLISH THE BEST RELATIONSHIP. HE SEEMED SURPRISED AT THE SIZE OF OUR EMBASSY STAFF COMPARED TO THE SOVIET STAFF OF 60 PERSONS.

9. I HAD MET THE AMBASSADOR SHORTLY AFTER MY ARRIVAL AND HAD TALKED TO HIM BRIEFLY AT THREE SOCIAL EVENTS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO COMPARE CONVERSATIONS AT SOCIAL EVENTS WITH THIS FIRST OFFICIAL TALK. NEVERTHELESS, IN OUR THREE PREVIOUS CONVERSATION YEFREMOV HAD SPOKEN AT GREATER LENGTH OF THE GOOD RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION, THE IMPORTANCE OF DETENTE, AND, AT THE SWEDISH LUNCHEON TO WHICH I HAVE REFERRED, YEFREMOV MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT DETENTE WAS ASSURED DESPITE THE SOVIET ACTION CANCELLING THE TRADE AGREEMENT.COOPER

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